example, the State would no longer have jurisdiction over mutual funds, and the bill would scale back State regulation securities offerings, substituting Securities and Exchange Commission for a dual State-Federal system in place. But, on the other hand, this is a good bill, it is a well balanced bill, and I hope we all vote for it.

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute, the balance of my time, to the gentleman from New York [Mr. FRISA], a member of the committee.

Mr. FRISA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me this time, and I would like to take this opportunity in joining with my colleagues from both sides of the aisle in acknowledging the tremendous leadership that the gentleman from Virginia, Chairman BLILEY, of the Committee on Commerce, has exhibited in this case to bring both sides together in a very complex issue, which, most importantly, will benefit the investors, all of them, the individual families who invest as well as the large pools of money that invest; because, really, Mr. Speaker, those investors are the few that drive the engine of the American economy by investing in the stock market their hard-earned money so that corporations will have the funds to invest in capital and in jobs. I think it represents yet another victory for the people and for the Committee on Commerce in crafting this bipartisan legislation.

I think it is also important, Mr. Speaker, to acknowledge that the chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, Arthur Levitt, has worked with us as well in order to craft this agreement. And I think, finally, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. FIELDS], the chairman of the subcommittee, who I have been pleased to work with, and the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MARKEY], the ranking member of the subcommittee, have provided leadership as well.

Mr. Speaker, I say to the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. BLILEY] and to all the others, this entire House can be proud of this legislation. I urge its adoption.

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to see consensus has been reached to move ahead with bipartisan legislation that will equip America's capital markets to compete in the global marketplace. The changes in this bill will ultimately make it easier for business people and investors all over this Nation to reach the American Dream.

We all know that communications technologies have made the world a smaller place. People and businesses looking for capital, or those looking to invest, are now able to shop around the world. They look for those markets that provide the highest degree of integrity, transparency, and liquidity, but do not require unnecessary or burdensome red tape.

H.R. 3005 makes commonsense changes to a system that today, makes the cost of capital generation unnecessarily high and overburdens the Securities and Exchange Commission. The most fundamental change provides efficiency by dividing financial instruments into those that are national in scope and those that are not. This allows the SEC to focus its resources as the sole regulator of larger, national offerings, while the States will carry out the crucial role of regulating smaller offerings. This change enables regulators to concentrate on those instruments they are best suited to oversee. At the same time, eliminating duplicative registration requirements will reduce the cost of raising capital. Thus, more companies will be able to create jobs, pay out higher dividends, and further expand their business.

These are the tangible effects of the bill we are addressing today. Thus, this bill moves entrepreneurs and investors one step closer to fulfilling the American Dream. Congress can and should continue to enact legislation that provides hope to the citizens of this Nation.

Mrs. COLLINS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, during three hearings held on securities amendments, the Commerce Committee heard support for sensible, targeted efforts to reform Federal securities laws to promote greater efficiency and capital formation in U.S. financial markets. We also heard from a number of witnesses, including Securities and Exchange Commission Chairman Arthur Levitt, who urged us to proceed carefully and cautiously, keeping in mind the fact that investor confidence and consumer protection must not in any way be compromised in this undertaking. I agree fully. I was extremely pleased that a bipartisan agreement was reached that heeded Chairman Levitt's sage device.

As we all know, U.S. capital markets are the strongest financial markets in the world. Today, nearly one-third of all families in the Nation have a portion of their savings invested in stocks, bonds, and mutual funds in order to ensure a better future for themselves and their loved ones. These investors have trust in their investments because our regulatory system has proven beneficial in protecting individuals from fraud and abuse perpetuated by unscrupulous brokers and dealers. We will be preserving and strengthening this trust with the legislation we consider before us today.

This legislation will maintain the authority of State securities regulators to police wrongdoing. In addition, the legislation in its current form ensures that the SEC mandate to protect American investors and the public interest as well as the long-term stability of our major markets remains intact. This is a most important point. While there is room to fine tune the regulatory functions of the SEC, reforms must never be structured in such a way that they undermine consumer confidence.

This bill, H.R. 2005, does not seek to greatly limit inspections of brokerage firms who have violated SEC rules or relieve firms of liability for recommending unsuitably risky investments to institutional clients. The bill also modifies previous language that would have eliminated the requirement in current law that investors be sent a prospectus and informed of the risks they face before they buy newly offered securities by requiring the SEC to move forward with its study of this issue.

Mr. Speaker, there is undoubtedly a need to monitor mutual fund regulation to fully account for the constantly evolving size, complexity, and investment opportunities of our Nation's financial markets. While mutual funds have grown by more than 20 percent annually throughout the 1980's and into the 1990's, Congress has not addressed the issue of fund regulation since 1970. This bill updates our securities laws.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3005.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, on May 9, 1996, 18 of my colleagues and I wrote to the SEC to express our strong concern about the SEC's order giving permanent approval to a preferencing program on the Cincinnati Stock Exchange, the CSE. Among the important issues raised in the letter was the adequacy of the CSE's surveillance system.

Preferencing enables a broker-dealer to take the other side of its own customer order, to the exclusion of the other competing market interest. Because preferencing presents a broker-dealer with a conflict between its duty to its customer as a broker and its financial self-interest as a dealer, an effective surveillance system is especially important. Among the unanswered questions about the CSE preferencing program is whether the CSE's surveillance system can ensure that dealers taking the other side of their customers' orders fulfill their fiduciary obligations to achieve the best price for their customers. Given the SEC's traditional emphasis on investor protection, it is surprising that the order approving the CSE preferencing program does not address this issue.

Mr. Speaker, today we take up H.R. 3005, the securities amendments of 1996. This legislation does not address the issue of preferencing but I understand that similar legislation in the other body may contain a provision directing the SEC to undertake detailed study of preferencing on exchange markets. Such a study would likely provide answers to some of the unanswered questions about preferencing on the CSE, such as the adequacy of the CSE's surveillance system. Unless such a study concludes that there are tangible benefits to investors and to the capital formation process from this questionable practice, I would support efforts to move swiftly to ban preferencing on exchanges.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. BLILEY] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3005, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3005 the bill just considered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

ANTI-CAR THEFT IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 1996

Mr. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2803) to amend the anti-car theft provisions of title 49, United